

# 2005 Missouri WHIP Scoring Worksheet Instructions

**Applicant(s):** Name(s) of applicant(s).

**Date:** Enter the date you are assisting the applicant with the application.

**Address:** Applicant's address.

**Farm Number:** FSA Farm Number.

**Tract Number:** Enter the tract number(s) included in this application.

**Acres in Application:** Total acres in this application.

**LRF:** Is applicant(s) a Limited Resource Farmer (by USDA definition) - enter "y" for yes or "n" for no. See website [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/smlfarmer\\_v2/help.htm](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/smlfarmer_v2/help.htm) and front page of form CCC-1200. (Acceptees may be required to submit supporting data to document choice.)

**County:** Enter the name of the County where the offered land is located.

## Rounding Numbers

Round up at 5. For example, if the number calculated is 10.4, and the answer is to be in whole numbers, then the answer should be "10". If the number calculated is 10.5, and the answer is to be in whole numbers, then the answer should be "11". For scores that should be calculated to the nearest tenth, a calculated score of 10.45 would be "10.5". A calculated score of 10.55 would be "10.6".

## Scoring

Applicants can only earn points for those conservation practices applied using WHIP funds.

Conservation practices that a producer applies on their own, or receives financial assistance from another program or agency, are not eligible for WHIP points. Examples: buffers planned through CRP or conservation practices planned to be applied using state cost share, are not eligible for WHIP points.

## Natural Community Improvement

- 1. Planned WHAG Community Model index is a minimum quality criteria of 0.5 as planned in the WHDP:** The WHAG Community Model index must at least reach quality criteria of 0.5 for planned conditions in WHDP. WHAG Community Models will be used to document habitat changes under WHIP. The Wildlife Habitat Development Plan (WHDP) must at least reach a quality level of 0.5 habitat suitability index for all contract acres (i.e., fields with essential practices and/or used to obtain ranking score). If the participant does not agree to this level, the WHDP is ineligible for funding. Each Priority Habitat type under contract will require one (weighted average, if needed) WHAG community model index. The weighted average will be used to score sections A & B. Section A will require a weighted average for all priority habitat types under contract. Section B will require a weighted average for all other habitat types under contract. A weighted average of the points scored from the above indexes is then used for the final score for this criterion.
- 2. Planned practices address basic habitat requirements of bobwhite quail on offered acres:**

BOBWHITE QUAIL HABITAT REQUIREMENTS – WHIP SCORING

*Quail require 3 habitat types.*

*The following guidelines present minimum requirements for bobwhite quail habitat development per 40-acre evaluation area.*

1. **Shrubby Cover (Covey Headquarters)** – areas of dense woody vegetation (shrub plantings, edge feathering) with low growing canopy (3-12' high) and little vegetation at ground level. Quail will center their activity on this cover type. Where livestock are present, shrubby cover should be fenced from livestock.
2. **Bare Ground** – the goal is to have 30% to 70% bare ground between clumps of vegetation. (If fescue/brome is the predominant stand, it should be eliminated or treated every other year.) This bare ground will allow ease of movement for quail. The remaining vegetation will provide an overhead canopy for protection from predators. Bare ground can be created by light disking, chemical treatment, and prescribed burning. Where livestock are present, bare ground areas should be fenced from livestock.
3. **Diverse Plant Community** – made up of grasses/forbs. Diverse plant community should be rated good/excellent for wildlife as listed in eFOTG 327, or a mix of plants as listed in eFOTG 643.

***Minimum habitat requirements for WHIP scoring – all habitat types must be adjacent to one another within a 40-acre evaluation area and on the same landowner to score points for quail. You cannot count habitat on an adjoining landowner.***

1. Shrubby Cover – a minimum of 0.1 acre per 40 acres, fenced from livestock.
2. Bare Ground – a minimum of 0.25 acre per 40 acres, fenced from livestock.
3. Diverse Plant Community – a minimum of 10% should be rated good/excellent for wildlife per 40 acres.

At least one of these habitat requirements will be provided by a planned practice in the WHIP application. Points can be awarded for each 40 acres on which all three habitat requirements are provided.

**Note:** The 40-acre habitat size provides the method to obtain the % of the offered acres planned for BWQ. For example: 160 acres are offered, 2 – 40 acres will be treated for BWQ = 80 acres out of 160 acres = 50%. The score = 50% X 10 = 5 points. If the offered acres is less than 40 acres and is treated for BWQ = 100%.

**EXAMPLE (note this is an EQIP example)**

Producer is interested in a rotational grazing system. To get quail points, producer must fence out woody draws/fence lines (at least 30' wide) to create short shrubby cover. If short shrubby cover is not present, apply edgefeathering or plant shrubs. Shrub planting/edgefeathering must be at least 30' wide. If fenced areas have vegetation not rated good/excellent for wildlife (fescue, brome, etc), the producer should apply herbicide to eradicate (at least 2 applications), in order to provide the bare ground habitat requirement. If the planned rotational grazing system will have diverse wildlife friendly grass component, points for quail may be scored.

If a potential WHIP participant is not interested in quail or quail management do not score points for quail.

**PRACTICES** that can be used to meet BWQ habitat requirements are:

- Any seeding practice (311, 327, 332, 342, 386, 391, 393, 512, 643 or 645 that includes plans for management/maintenance **and**
  - Uses cool-season grass/legume mixes containing 60% species rated good or excellent for wildlife with the exception of smooth brome, and/or
  - Uses native grass mixes with native forbs
- 645 and 647 shrub planting, woody cover control, edge-feathering, light disking, food plot, fescue or smooth brome eradication, green browse plot
- 338 Prescribed Burning
- 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment with perimeter row in shrubs
- 391 Riparian Buffer with outside 4 rows planted to shrubs
- 666 and 472
- 612 Tree/Shrub Establishment limited to shrub plantings only.

**For further information contact your Area Biologist.**

**OR:**

**Priority habitat type is in a Grassland Coalition Focus Area:** See maps in the WHIP folder, posted on the ftp site: [ftp://ftp.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/pub/STC\\_Staff/Farm%20Bill%20Programs/](ftp://ftp.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/pub/STC_Staff/Farm%20Bill%20Programs/)

## **Federal Threatened and Endangered or State Rare Species Habitat**

**3. Planned practices are in within the buffer area of a federally listed threatened or endangered species and will impact the recovery or protection of the species:** List the species on the scoring worksheet. The contributions for this rating factor must be verified using the MDC Natural Heritage Database adapted for NRCS use, and the T&E information in Section II of the Missouri eFOTG. Critical for Federal Species: WHDP is within the buffer area for a federally listed T&E species as shown on the Missouri Heritage database and will impact recovery or protection of the species.

**OR:**

**Planned practices are within the buffer area of a state listed threatened or endangered species or a state rare species and will impact the recovery or protection of the species:** List the species on the scoring worksheet. The buffer area will be specific to the species on the list. The contributions for this rating factor must be verified using the MDC Natural Heritage Database adapted for NRCS use, and the T&E information in Section II of the Missouri eFOTG. Critical for State Species: WHDP is within the buffer area for a state listed T&E or rare species as shown on the Missouri Heritage database and will impact recovery or protection of the species.

**OR:**

**Planned practices are adjacent to the buffer area of a federal or state listed threatened or endangered species or a state rare species and will likely provide habitat for the species:** List

the species on the scoring worksheet. The contributions for this rating factor must be verified using the MDC Natural Heritage Database adapted for NRCS use, and the T&E information in Section II of the Missouri eFOTG.

## Restoration of Priority Habitats

4. **Planned Practices include the establishment, management, restoration, or habitat manipulation of a native plant community of four or more plant species on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

**OR:**

**Planned Practices include the establishment, management, restoration, or habitat manipulation of a native plant community for at least three plant species on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

**OR:**

**Planned Practices include the establishment, management, restoration, or habitat manipulation of wildlife friendly plant mixes on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

**OR:**

**Planned Practices include the establishment, management, restoration, or habitat manipulation of a native plant community of a single native plant species on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

WHIP encourages the restoration of native habitats. A more diverse mix of plant species provides for a greater bio-diversity in plant, insect and animal life. Both herbaceous and woody materials should be matched to the eco-type. Planned habitat improvements should take into consideration the wildlife emphasis species for the priority habitat. For example, trees should not be planted on prairie soils in priority habitats where prairie wildlife species are being encouraged: native woody shrubs would be an appropriate planting component.

## Operation and Maintenance

5. **Planned practices require periodic maintenance or management on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

**OR:**

**Planned Practices require annual (or more frequent) maintenance or management on a minimum of 51% of the offered acres:**

Habitat developments requiring less frequent management and maintenance will probably stay at the desired vegetative seral stage. For example: a timber stand improvement practice would require less maintenance than a grassland planting planned for prescribed burning.

## Cost Effectiveness of Planned Conservation Practices

**6. and 7. Cost Effectiveness = Total WHIP dollars/Acres in the application:**

The habitat benefits per WHIP dollar spent is a factor that must be considered in WHIP.

## **Societal Benefits**

### **8. Planned practices on offered acres will provide reasonable access for recreation and/or education:**

This section is included to give credit to those contracts that provide reasonable off-site benefits.